

Supervisor's Handbook



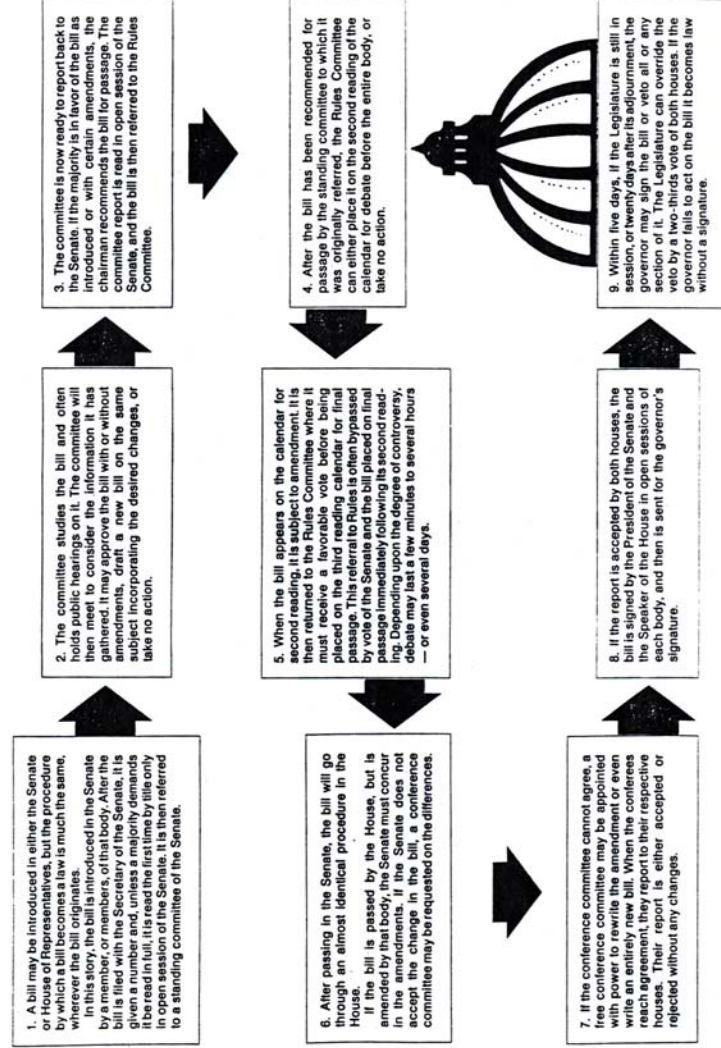
Revised First Edition: November 2003

THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW



How A Bill Becomes A Law

such other states permits the districts in such states to enter into such agreements.

The commission shall have authority to propose, guide, and facilitate the establishment and carrying out of any such agreement;

(13) Every district shall, through public hearings, annual meetings, publications, or other means, keep the general public, agencies and occupiers of land within the district, informed of the works and activities planned and administered by the district, of the purposes these will serve, of the income and expenditures of the district, of the funds borrowed by the district and the purposes for which such funds are expended, and of the results achieved annually by the district; and

(14) The supervisors of conservation districts may designate an area, state, and national association of conservation districts as a coordinating agency in the execution of the duties imposed by this chapter, and to make gifts in the form of dues, quotas, or otherwise to such associations for costs of services rendered, and may support and attend such meetings as may be required to promote and perfect the organization and to effect its purposes.

[1999 c 305 § 8; 1973 1st ex.s. c 184 § 23; 1963 c 110 § 1; 1961 c 240 § 13; 1955 c 304 § 23. Prior: (i) 1939 c 187 § 8; RRS § 10726-8. (ii) 1939 c 187 § 13; RRS § 10726-13.]

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districts as its "renewable resources program". Copies shall be made available by the districts to the appropriate counties, municipalities, special purpose districts and state agencies, and shall be made available in convenient places for examination by public land occupier or private interest concerned. Summaries of the program and selected material therefrom shall be distributed as widely as feasible for public information;

(8) To administer any project or program concerned with the conservation of renewable natural resources located within its boundaries undertaken by any federal, state, or other public agency by entering into a contract or other appropriate administrative arrangement with any agency administering such project or program;

(9) Cooperate with other districts organized under chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. in the exercise of any of its powers;

(10) To accept donations, gifts, and contributions in money, services, materials, or otherwise, from the United States or any of its agencies, from this state or any of its agencies, or from any other source, and to use or expend such moneys, services, materials, or any contributions in carrying out the purposes of chapter 184, Laws 1973 1st ex. sess.;

(11) To sue and be sued in the name of the district; to have a seal which shall be judicially noticed; have perpetual succession unless terminated as hereinafter provided; to make and execute contracts and other instruments, necessary or convenient to the exercise of its powers; to borrow money and to pledge, mortgage and assign the income of the district and its real or personal property therefor; and to make, amend rules and regulations not inconsistent with chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. and to carry into effect its purposes;

(12) Any two or more districts may engage in joint activities by agreement between or among them in planning, financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and administering any program or project concerned with the conservation of renewable natural resources. The districts concerned may make available for purposes of the agreement any funds, property, personnel, equipment, or services available to them under chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess.;

Any district may enter into such agreements with a district or districts in adjoining states to carry out such purposes if the law in

agriculture, minimal flow, and industrial uses, watershed stabilization, control of soil erosion, retardation of water run-off, flood prevention and control, reservoirs and other water storage, restriction of developments of flood plains, protection of open space and scenery, preservation of natural beauty, protection of fish and wildlife, preservation of wilderness areas and wild rivers, the prevention or reduction of sedimentation and other pollution in rivers and other waters, and such location of highways, schools, housing developments, industries, airports and other facilities and structures as will fit the needs of the state and be consistent with the best uses of the renewable natural resources of the state. The program shall include an inventory of all renewable natural resources in the district, a compilation of current resource needs, projections of future resource requirements, priorities for various resource activities, projected timetables, descriptions of available alternatives, and provisions for coordination with other resource programs.

The district shall also prepare an annual work plan, which shall describe the action programs, services, facilities, materials, working arrangements and estimated funds needed to carry out the parts of the long-range programs that are of the highest priorities.

The districts shall hold public hearings at appropriate times in connection with the preparation of programs and plans, shall give careful consideration to the views expressed and problems revealed in hearings, and shall keep the public informed concerning their programs, plans, and activities. Occupiers of land shall be invited to submit proposals for consideration to such hearings. The districts may supplement such hearings with meetings, referenda and other suitable means to determine the wishes of interested parties and the general public in regard to current and proposed plans and programs of a district. They shall confer with public and private agencies, individually and in groups, to give and obtain information and understanding of the impact of district operations upon agriculture, forestry, water supply and quality, flood control, particular industries, commercial concerns and other public and private interests, both rural and urban.

Each district shall submit to the commission its proposed long-range program and annual work plans for review and comment.

The long-range renewable natural resource program, together with the supplemental annual work plans, developed by each district under the foregoing procedures shall have official status as the authorized program of the district, and it shall be published by the

History of Conservation Districts

During the 1930's, the Dust Bowl made the need to conserve natural resources, particularly soil, very clear. Agencies ranging from Land Grant Universities to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration researched and implemented conservation practices throughout the nation. Eventually, the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), now the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), was created under the Soil Conservation Act of 1935 to develop and implement soil erosion control programs.

Sometimes agencies working with conservation ended up competing with each other. Local leadership was needed to coordinate their efforts and tie them into local conditions and priorities. Because of this, the U.S. Congress developed a model Conservation District law for consideration by state governments.

In 1939, the State Legislature passed an enabling act (RCW 89.08), which established conservation districts in Washington. Conservation districts were to direct programs protecting local renewable natural resources. Washington State now has forty-eight conservation districts in thirty-nine counties.

Conservation Districts' Mission

Conservation districts develop and implement programs to protect and conserve Soil, Water, Prime and Unique Farmland, Rangeland, Woodland, Wildlife, Energy, and other renewable resources on non-federal lands. Districts also stabilize local economies and resolve conflicts in land use. Nationally, conservation districts usually operate under the following general policies:

- Conservation should be led by local citizens.
- The final responsibility for conservation lies with the landowner.
- Landowners have legitimate operating goals.
- Conservation districts are responsive to both landowners and operators, and the community as a whole.
- The best agricultural land should be maintained for agriculture.

Conservation districts are subdivisions of state government, much like school boards. Each district is governed by a Board of five Supervisors. Supervisors are local residents who serve voluntarily without pay. Three are elected by local citizens and two are appointed by the Washington Conservation Commission. Supervisors may come from many different occupations, but by law, three of the five supervisors must be landowners or farm operators.

As a district supervisor, you have a unique niche among agencies managing Washington's natural resources. You serve as the grass roots representative of landowners and the general public in your community, providing leadership and direction to bring volunteer cooperation in natural resource conservation programs. Upon taking the oath of office you agreed to carry out the responsibilities of your position in accordance with the Washington Conservation District Law (RCW Title 89).

(3) To carry out preventative and control measures and works of improvement for the conservation of renewable natural resources, within the district including, but not limited to, engineering operations, methods of cultivation, the growing of vegetation, changes in use of lands, and the measures listed in RCW 89.08.010, on any lands within the district upon obtaining the consent of the occupier of such lands and such necessary rights or interests in such lands as may be required;

(4) To cooperate or enter into agreements with, and within the limits of appropriations duly made available to it by law, to furnish financial or other aid to any agency, governmental or otherwise, or any occupier of lands within the district in the carrying on of preventive and control measures and works of improvement for the conservation of renewable natural resources within the district, subject to such conditions as the supervisors may deem necessary to advance the purposes of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. For purposes of this subsection only, land occupiers who are also district supervisors are not subject to the provisions of RCW 42.23.030;

(5) To obtain options upon and to acquire in any manner, except by condemnation, by purchase, exchange, lease, gift, bequest, devise, or otherwise, any property, real or personal, or rights or interests therein; to maintain, administer, and improve any properties acquired, to receive income from such properties and to expend such income in carrying out the purposes and provisions of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess.; and to sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any of its property or interests therein in furtherance of the purposes and the provisions of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess.;

(6) To make available, on such terms, as it shall prescribe, to land occupiers within the district, agricultural and engineering machinery and equipment, fertilizer, seeds, seedlings, and such other equipment and material as will assist them to carry on operations upon their lands for the conservation of renewable natural resources;

(7) To prepare and keep current a comprehensive long-range program recommending the conservation of all the renewable natural resources of the district. Such programs shall be directed toward the best use of renewable natural resources and in a manner that will best meet the needs of the district and the state, taking into consideration, where appropriate, such uses as farming, grazing, timber supply, forest, parks, outdoor recreation, potable water supplies for urban and rural areas, water for

The board may invite the legislative body of any municipality or county near or within the district, to designate a representative to advise and consult with it on all questions of program and policy which may affect the property, water supply, or other interests of such municipality or county. The governing body of a district shall appoint such advisory committees as may be needed to assure the availability of appropriate channels of communication to the board of supervisors, to persons affected by district operations, and to local, regional, state and interstate special-purpose districts and agencies responsible for community planning, zoning, or other resource development activities. The district shall keep such committees informed of its work, and such advisory committees shall submit recommendations from time to time to the board of supervisors.

[2000 c 45 § 1; 1973 1st ex.s. c 184 § 22; 1955 c 304 § 22. Prior: 1949 c 106 § 2, part; 1939 c 187 § 7, part; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 10726-7, part.]

RCW 89.08.220

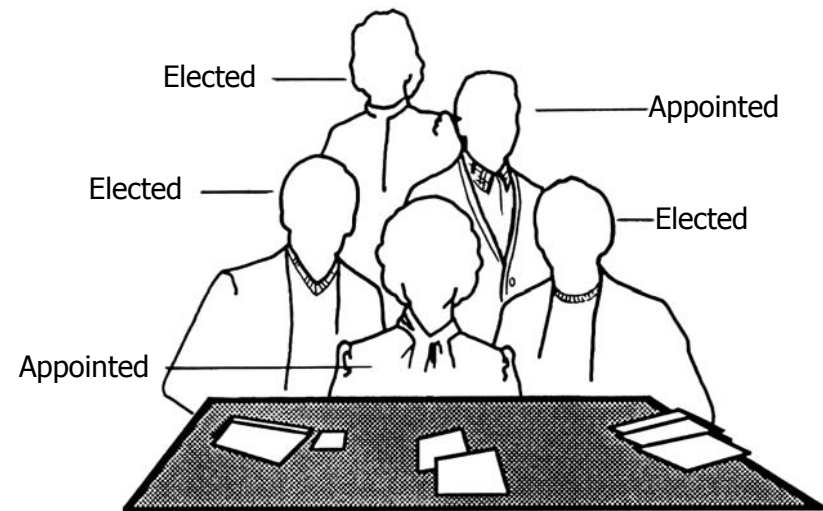
Corporate status and powers of district.

A conservation district organized under the provisions of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. shall constitute a governmental subdivision of this state, and a public body corporate and politic exercising public powers, but shall not levy taxes or issue bonds and such district, and the supervisors thereof, shall have the following powers, in addition to others granted in other sections of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess.:

(1) To conduct surveys, investigations, and research relating to the conservation of renewable natural resources and the preventive and control measures and works of improvement needed, to publish the results of such surveys, investigations, or research, and to disseminate information concerning such preventive and control measures and works of improvement: PROVIDED, That in order to avoid duplication of research activities, no district shall initiate any research program except in cooperation with the government of this state or any of its agencies, or with the United States or any of its agencies;

(2) To conduct educational and demonstrational projects on any lands within the district upon obtaining the consent of the occupier of such lands and such necessary rights or interests in such lands as may be required in order to demonstrate by example the means, methods, measures, and works of improvement by which the conservation of renewable natural resources may be carried out;

Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities:



Conservation District Board of Supervisors

(Three must be landowners or farm operators)

Program

Conservation district supervisors develop a wide variety of programs. Examples of successful conservation district programs include:

- Providing technical assistance, materials, and equipment to control soil erosion and comply with federal and state laws.
- Providing technical assistance in planting trees.
- Sponsoring youth conservation camps.
- Developing watershed-wide water quality improvement projects.
- Researching non-point source pollution.
- And many others...

To develop and maintain effective programs you must identify local conservation needs, set corresponding goals, plan to achieve those goals, ensure implementation of your plans, and evaluate the district program's effectiveness.

Planning

Planning is the basic tool for developing conservation district programs. There are several different levels of conservation district plans. A Long Range Plan (or "long range program") is developed every 5-10 years, to serve as a broad outline of your conservation district's response to long term shifts in land use, population patterns and improvements in technology. An Annual Plan (or "annual plan of work") outlines specific objectives and activities to achieve long range plans. The annual plan should be completed two to three months before the year being planned. You will also sponsor or cooperate in the development of Project Plans for watershed projects and other specific conservation efforts on your district.

Setting Goals

After researching and defining local conservation issues, you develop goals to address identified needs. Goals have different levels. On your long range plan, you set broad strategic goals which focus on your conservation district's direction for the next 1-5 years. In your annual plan you will list more specific, measurable operational goals or "objectives" for the concrete results needed to meet strategic goals.

Policy

One role inherent in conservation district program development is setting policy for how district personnel and funds are used to meet conservation needs. Your policies should establish the type of service the district provides and guidelines for appropriate use of district resources. Basic mandatory policies for running a conservation district are set by the Washington Conservation Commission. Details on these policies are in the Procedure Manual.

resources of this state, and for the control and prevention of soil erosion, and for the prevention of flood water and sediment damages, and for furthering agricultural and nonagricultural phases of conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water, and thereby to preserve natural resources, control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, assist in maintaining the navigability of rivers and harbors, preserve wildlife, protect the tax base, protect public lands, and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of this state. To this end all incorporated cities and towns heretofore excluded from the boundaries of a conservation district established pursuant to the provisions of the state conservation district law, as amended, may be approved by the conservation commission as being included in and deemed a part of the district upon receiving a petition for annexation signed by the governing authority of the city or town and the conservation district within the exterior boundaries of which it lies in whole or in part or to which it lies closest.

[1973 1st ex.s. c 184 § 2; 1939 c 187 § 2; RRS § 10726-2.]

RCW 89.08.210

Powers and duties of supervisors.

The supervisors may employ a secretary, treasurer, technical experts, and such other officers, agents, and employees, permanent and temporary, as they may require, and determine their qualifications, duties, and compensation. It may call upon the attorney general for legal services, or may employ its own counsel and legal staff. The supervisors may delegate to their chairman, to one or more supervisors, or to one or more agents or employees such powers and duties as it deems proper. The supervisors shall furnish to the commission, upon request, copies of such internal rules, regulations, orders, contracts, forms, and other documents as they shall adopt or employ, and such other information concerning their activities as the commission may require in the performance of its duties under chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. The supervisors shall provide for the execution of surety bonds for officers and all employees who shall be entrusted with funds or property.

The supervisors shall provide for the keeping of a full and accurate record of all proceedings, resolutions, regulations, and orders issued or adopted. The supervisors shall provide for an annual audit of the accounts of receipts and disbursements in accordance with procedures prescribed by regulations of the commission.

deterioration of crops grown thereon, and declining acre yields despite development of scientific processes for increasing such yields; loss of soil and water which causes destruction of food and cover for wildlife; a blowing and washing of soil into streams which silts over spawning beds, and destroys water plants, diminishing the food supply of fish; a diminishing of the underground water reserve, which causes water shortages, intensifies periods of drought, and causes crop failures; an increase in the speed and volume of rainfall run-off, causing severe and increasing floods, which bring suffering, disease, and death; impoverishment of families attempting to farm eroding and eroded lands; damage to roads, highways, railways, buildings, and other property from floods and from dust storms; and losses in navigation, hydroelectric power, municipal water supply, irrigation developments, farming and grazing.

(3) That to conserve soil resources and control and prevent soil erosion and prevent flood water and sediment damages, and further agricultural and nonagricultural phases of the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water, it is necessary that land-use practices contributing to soil wastage and soil erosion be discouraged and discontinued, and appropriate soil-conserving land-use practices, and works of improvement for flood prevention of agricultural and nonagricultural phases of the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water be adopted and carried out; that among the procedures necessary for widespread adoption, are the carrying on of engineering operations such as the construction of terraces, terrace outlets, check-dams, desilting basins, flood water retarding structures, channel floodways, dikes, ponds, ditches, and the like; the utilization of strip cropping, contour cultivating, and contour furrowing; land irrigation; seeding and planting of waste, sloping, abandoned, or eroded lands to water-conserving and erosion-preventing plants, trees, and grasses; forestation and reforestation; rotation of crops; soil stabilizations with trees, grasses, legumes, and other thick-growing, soil-holding crops, retardation of run-off by increasing absorption of rainfall; and retirement from cultivation of steep, highly erosive areas and areas now badly gullied or otherwise eroded.

(4) Whereas, there is a pressing need for the conservation of renewable resources in all areas of the state, whether urban, suburban, or rural, and that the benefits of resource practices, programs, and projects, as carried out by the state conservation commission and by the conservation districts, should be available to all such areas; therefore, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the legislature to provide for the conservation of the renewable

Other district policies will have been set by supervisors who served before you, and are not necessarily mandatory. Study local conservation district policies to see if they are still appropriate to current conditions. Update them if necessary. Also consult materials provided by the Washington and National Associations of Conservation Districts for further input on district policy.

Information\Education

Conservation districts encourage volunteer cooperation of landowners and the general public through information and education. Landowners and operators must be educated so they will understand and adopt conservation values and practices. The general public must be reached so they will understand their stake in conservation and contribute their financial, political, and volunteer support to district programs. You must also inform local, state and federal legislators on conservation implications of issues they address.

To have effective information/education programs, supervisors should understand their audiences and the most appropriate methods to reach them. They should also understand how to integrate public relations into their program. Finally, supervisors should be aware of the many forms of media available to communicate their message.

Adults

Conservation districts work with many adult audiences, including land-owners and users, community leaders, civic clubs, cooperating agency personnel, and others. Our learning styles usually change as we get older. We have more life experience, look for education that can be applied in the present, and expect teachers to be sensitive to our educational needs. Finally, adults have the freedom to participate in your district educational efforts or not. There are a variety of methods to reach adults including:

- Personal contact.
- Inviting persons to board meetings.
- Open house tours.

- Annual meetings.
- Community meetings.
- Newsletters.
- Field tours.
- Demonstration plots.
- Case studies.
- Workshops.
- Speeches or films,
- Panel discussions.
- Symposia.

Contact your local Cooperative Extension office for help in developing conservation education programs for adults.

Legislators

Legislators are a unique adult audience. District programs are often directly affected by local, state, or federal laws. The Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) and the State and National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) are the principal legislative arms for conservation districts; inform them of your legislative concerns.

You can assist the WACD and NACD in their lobbying efforts. Learn how the legislative process works and get to know your representatives' backgrounds and views on conservation. Make personal contact with representatives through concise, well thought out letters or telephone calls. You may also have opportunities to give testimony in formal meetings or hearings on conservation issues.

Youth

A major aim of conservation education is to enrich peoples' conservation values. The older we get, the harder it is to be open to fresh conservation values, especially if, as has been the trend, we are further removed from the land. Youth offer one of the most fertile grounds for enriching the general public's conservation values.

Chapter 89.08 RCW - Conservation Districts

RCW 89.08 is available online at the Washington State Conservation Commission website in its entirety:
<http://www.scc.wa.gov/agency/RCW8908/>

RCW 89.08.010

Preamble.

It is hereby declared, as a matter of legislative determination:

(1) That the lands of the state of Washington are among the basic assets of the state and that the preservation of these lands is necessary to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of its people; that improper land-use practices have caused and have contributed to, and are now causing and contributing to, a progressively more serious erosion of the lands of this state by wind and water; that the breaking of natural grass, plant and forest cover have interfered with the natural factors of soil stabilization, causing loosening of soil and exhaustion of humus, and developing a soil condition that favors erosion; that the topsoil is being blown and washed off of lands; that there has been an accelerated washing of sloping lands; that these processes of erosion by wind and water speed up with removal of absorptive topsoil, causing exposure of less absorptive and less protective but more erosive subsoil; that failure by any land occupier to conserve the soil and control erosion upon his lands may cause a washing and blowing of soil from his lands onto other lands and makes the conservation of soil and control of erosion on such other lands difficult or impossible, and that extensive denuding of land for development creates critical erosion areas that are difficult to effectively regenerate and the resulting sediment causes extensive pollution of streams, ponds, lakes and other waters.

(2) That the consequences of such soil erosion in the form of soil blowing and soil washing are the silting and sedimentation of stream channels, reservoirs, dams, ditches, and harbors, and loading the air with soil particles; the loss of fertile soil material in dust storms; the piling up of soil on lower slopes and its deposit over alluvial plains; the reduction in productivity or outright ruin of rich bottom lands by overwash of poor subsoil material, sand, and gravel swept out of the hills; deterioration of soil and its fertility,

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- Interaction with others interested in natural resource conservation.
 - Input into local, state, and federal conservation programs.
 - Training through Washington Conservation Commission and WADE.

Time required

Three-year term. Attend 12 regularly scheduled board meetings, as well as committee and other special meetings-- for an average of 20 days/year.

You may work with the whole youth population or specific groups, such as area schools, 4-H clubs, Future Farmers of America, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and others. Try to be conscious of the special needs of different youth audiences, such as teens vs. kindergartners, etc., and use the most appropriate methods. It is vital to "get down on their level" to be effective. Conservation districts have used a wide variety of methods to reach youth, including:

- Training teachers and youth group leaders in conservation.
- Providing educational materials for conservation components of youth group programs.
- Inviting youth group leaders to board meetings.
- Setting up a "youth board" -- a small scale version of the conservation district board.
- Seeking sponsors for awards and other conservation programs for youth.
- Encouraging youth groups to implement conservation plans on youth group facilities and property.
- Developing conservation programs and projects which can involve youth.
- Locating conservation projects in areas meaningful to youth.
- Envirothon.

The NACD has a variety of ready-made educational materials for working with youth. There are also materials developed by other groups, such as Project Learning Tree, Project Wild, and others.

Public Relations

Your conservation district's public image affects every aspect of your work. Public Relations is a continuing program to help people understand what your conservation district is, what you are doing, and why it is important. Good public relations can¹:

¹ Adapted from United Way and NACD.

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- Inform the public of what the conservation district is and does.
 - Promote favorable recognition of the district.
 - Ensure that potential cooperators are aware of the availability of district assistance.
 - Build rapport with other groups.
 - Increase the amount of funds that your district and other districts receive.
 - Increase the quality and amount of assistance the district obtains from cooperating agencies.
 - Improve the quality of people who serve as conservation district supervisors or on conservation district committees.

Your board should appoint one person or a committee to be in charge of conservation district public relations. The district should set goals for basic understandings you would like the public to have about your district. These public relations goals should grow naturally out of what your conservation district is doing, and then permeate all aspects of your conservation districts' plans and programs.

As with more educational efforts, understand different audiences and tailor your public relations messages to be interesting to each. Make sure you send consistent information. Sometimes written, graphic, and non-verbal aspects of your programs can give different messages. In developing and maintaining your conservation district's public relations program:

- Board members and associate supervisors should represent the board in person whenever possible -- don't rely on paid staff.
- Pay attention to public relations details throughout your district program: treat people warmly over the phone and in the mail; follow through on commitments; pay attention to cultural differences, and give adequate recognition to agencies, associations, and other groups you work with.

Washington Conservation District Supervisor Job Description

Description

Conservation district supervisors serve on a five member board that develops and implements programs to protect and conserve Soil, Water, Prime and Unique Farmland, Rangeland, Woodland, Wildlife, Energy, and other renewable resources on local non-federal lands.

Duties

- Identify local conservation needs and develop, implement, and evaluate programs to meet them.
- Educate and inform landowners and operators, general public, and local, state and federal legislators on conservation issues and programs.
- Supervise other volunteers and paid staff working with the district; coordinate with cooperating agency personnel.
- Administer the district by delegating tasks through a structure of board officers and members, committees, and others. Raise and budget district funds, and report on activities to the public.
- Coordinate assistance and funding from federal, state, and local government; district associations; and private groups.

Qualifications

- Interest and background in conserving renewable natural resources.
- Communication skills.

Relationships

- Other District Supervisors.
- Washington State Conservation Commission.

Benefits

- Satisfaction in seeing conservation practices applied.

National Conservation District Employees Association (NCDEA)

The NCDEA was formed in 1992 to strengthen Conservation District programs, provide assistance, information and support to Conservation District boards and their employees. The association also promotes the professional development of Conservation district employees and will assist any agency, association, organization, municipality, group, or individual who supports Conservation Districts in the spirit of cooperation, sound conservation practices, and proper land use.

The NACD and many other sources have more specific information on conducting effective public relations programs. The Washington Conservation Commission can also help you with this.

Working with the Media

Whether you are engaging in information, education, public relations, or all three, you will use a whole range of media, from personal contact to mass media.

Try to establish friendly, mutually helpful relationships with media representatives. If you convince them of the importance of your program, they will convince the public. Your district might have a committee to coordinate media relations and decide:

- Who your audiences are?
- Why you want media coverage?
- Which media would be most effective in reaching different audiences?

Supervision

People are the primary resource of a conservation district. Part of your board responsibility is to supervise yourselves, paid district staff, associate board members, committees, and volunteers, and coordinate with agency personnel so everyone can smoothly carry out the conservation district mission.

Members of the Board of Supervisors

The first people you must supervise are yourselves, both as individuals and as a board.

As an individual board member, are you?

- Attending and actively participating in all board meetings?
- Carrying out your committee responsibilities?
- Keeping abreast of local conservation issues?
- Attending meetings of area and state associations of conservation districts?

As a board, are you?

- Identifying local conservation needs and meeting them?
- Keeping your conservation district's mission ("reason for being") in focus?
- Working effectively with district staff and cooperating agencies?
- Efficiently implementing district programs?
- Making sure your board's policies and activities are consistent with the policies of the Washington Conservation Commission and the Washington Association of Conservation Districts?
- Following correct budget and audit procedures?
- Developing fresh annual plans?
- Reporting to the public on your district's programs?

You may evaluate yourselves, or have someone from the outside evaluate your board (ex: peer review by a group of supervisors from outside the state or region). There are a variety of board evaluation tools in the books listed in the "Reference" section of this handbook.

Obtaining New Board Members

Conservation district supervisors are elected or appointed to three year terms. While supervisors can be re-elected, potential new board members should be constantly cultivated. Try to keep board membership representative of all types of landowners or operators, community groups, and conservation interests in your district. The more representative your board is, the broader the base of support for your district's activities. Also look at skills that are needed for your board (including interpersonal skills). For example, maybe your district's educational programs aren't as strong as you would like...you might recruit someone with a strong educational background.

Conservation District Associations

Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD)

The WACD is a non-profit, nongovernmental organization of the 48 conservation districts in Washington State. The WACD is made up of six area associations of conservation districts and serves as a state voice for conservation districts on state policy, legislation, communication, and funding for conservation activities. The WACD also provides forums to inform, train and educate supervisors and recognize outstanding district individuals and programs. The WACD has standing committees on research, district operations, education, finance, forestry, land-use planning, legislation, public and private rangelands, pollution, recreation, water resources, resolutions, soil stewardship.

National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)

The NACD is a non-profit, nongovernmental organization representing over three thousand districts and their state associations in the fifty states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The NACD lobbies for federal conservation legislation and funding in Congress. It also provides brochures, reports, conservation films, training, and education.

Washington Association of District Employees (WADE)

The WADE was formed in 1986 to develop conservation district employees' abilities through continuing education, recognition and a network of professional support. Consult the Commission Directory for more information about WADE area directors and officers.

Nomination and Election Procedures

Your board should have a "nominating committee" to search for energetic persons who are committed to conservation and willing to devote time and effort as a board member.

Conservation district elections should be held during the first quarter of the year and be well announced to the public. Forms for appointed supervisors may be obtained from the Conservation Commission. The Procedure Manual (Section 500) lists specific procedures for electing and appointing new supervisors.

Supervisors can be reappointed if they fulfill qualifications specified in the Procedure Manual. Supervisors can also be re-elected, but they must run against other candidates for the position.

New Supervisor Orientation

After new supervisors take the oath of office, welcome them with a letter or phone call and issue news releases announcing their new position. Formally orient new supervisors, but don't burden them with too much information at once. Initial orientation is usually done by the board chair. The Supervisor's Handbook is a good tool to provide the new supervisors with. When they are appointed to a committee, that committee should orient them as well. Your Conservation Commission Field Operations Manager can also help orient new supervisors.

Continuing Supervisor Development

Try to develop your board skills with written materials or other resources. Share these materials with your fellow supervisors as well. Meetings of your area Association of Conservation Districts and the annual meeting of the Washington Association of Conservation Districts, the Washington Association of District Employees, and the Washington Conservation Commission Field Service Managers are also opportunities to develop supervisor skills.

It is also good to periodically rotate board members to different positions and committee assignments to broaden their experience and "promote" them. Don't forget to recognize each other's service, effort, and development.

Associate Supervisors

Associate supervisors are officially appointed by the board as advisors and representatives. Associates don't vote on board decisions, but augment your knowledge and experience, and assist with conservation district programs. They also offer a way to cultivate potential new supervisors, allow former supervisors to remain active in the district, and broaden community input to your district. Be sure to orient associates just as you would supervisors, and involve them in meaningful activities and projects.

Employment Procedures

Before hiring, you should identify your needs for an employee. Analyze the tasks that need to be accomplished, and then write a position description listing what the employee would do in concise statements. Determine how much the district should pay this person and where those funds would be obtained. After deciding what the district needs and how to pay them, fill the position. This is the responsibility of the contact supervisor.

The board may place some of the responsibility for this with their district manager, however, only the board can authorize the hiring of a new employee. The district manager, in most cases, will supervise the other employees. Before starting active recruiting, prepare a fact sheet showing:

- Details of employment.
- Whether the position is full or part-time.
- Pay range.
- Term of the position (is the position permanent or temporary -- if the latter, how long will the position last?).
- Amount of sick and annual leave and benefits.
- Other facts important to the position.

Local and County Government

Nearly all conservation districts in Washington are along county lines, and while there is no legal relationship between the two, counties can be helpful in several ways. Counties can provide: office space; funding; co-sponsorship for watershed projects and responsibility for operation and maintenance; bridge and culvert replacement; use of county earthmoving equipment; cooperation on county parks and other county owned land; funds for soil survey. County contacts include: commissioners, council, auditor, treasurer, recorder, engineer, assessor, highway superintendent, health officer, planning commission, parks and recreation department, weed district and others. Similar assistance can be available for city & municipal governments.

Washington State University Cooperative Extension (WSU)

Assistance from WSU is commonly found through the WSU Cooperative Extension. Extension agents ("county agents") and specialists are available to counsel, educate and train conservation districts in economics, engineering, agronomy and soils, animal sciences, entomology, food science and technology, forestry and range management, home economics, horticulture, plant pathology, sociology, veterinary science, and many other areas. Most counties have an Extension office which serves as the local contact for conservation districts to request Extension assistance. WSU Cooperative Extension is also responsible for 4-H, which can be an excellent vehicle for youth conservation education programs.

You should also prepare a position announcement which includes:

- A short description of the conservation district.
- Salary range.
- Necessary qualifications.
- A brief review of the position description.

If the employee will be using office space or equipment of an assisting agency, a cooperative agreement must be developed and signed by all parties concerned. Finally, you should either prepare or obtain an application form.

Next, advertise the position and collect applications. Then review applications, check references and interview applicants. The entire board is then briefed on applications and interviewers' recommendations so they can make a choice.

Send candidate letter of appointment. After a candidate has accepted, notify the other applicants, set up a starting date, and obtain personnel and fringe benefit forms. Make sure new employees understand their responsibilities and how to carry them out. Orient them to the district and train them in specific district procedures. Have new employee review and sign district policy and Procedure Manual.

The NACD's Personnel Management Reference Book and the WCC District Procedure Manual have more information on position descriptions, fact sheets, position announcements, application forms, and other details of hiring district employees.

Staff Evaluation

Conservation district employees should be evaluated yearly to clarify expectations, identify continued professional development needs, and share concerns. This may be the district manager's responsibility; otherwise, a contact supervisor should be appointed to do this. You can reasonably expect the following from staff:

- Attention to details of meetings.
- Complete, concise, and accurate information.

- Honesty in individual and organizational relationships.
- Judicious use of time.
- Meeting of agreed upon deadlines, with notification if deadlines cannot be met.
- Prompt response to requests for information.
- Prompt return of phone calls.

In return for this, staff working for your board can reasonably expect²:

- Fulfillment of commitments within the agreed upon deadlines.
- Organizational knowledge and ability.
- Candid performance appraisal and assistance in performance.
- Support in controversial situations.
- Easy access by phone or visitation.
- Loyalty, confidentiality, and sensitivity.
- Incentives and rewards to promote and recognize accomplishment.

District employees should have an opportunity for grievance, if the need arises. Consult the NACD Personnel Reference Book and District Policy and Procedure Manual for details on making these arrangements.

Board/Staff Relationships

Relationships between your board and the staff must be very clear. It can be exasperating for a district employee to have "5 bosses at once," especially if they offer conflicting input! The contact supervisor is the only board member who works directly with the staff. They should maintain a keen awareness of employee concerns, initiate evaluations, salary increases, and other personnel actions. The contact supervisor may rely on an NRCS representative for daily supervision. If you have a district manager, they should

Office of Financial Management (OFM)

The OFM provides budget planning and fiscal administration for state agencies. The OFM also monitors agency spending, maintains the statewide accounting system, and forecasts state population.

Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

In 1994, the departments of Fisheries and Wildlife were combined to more effectively protect and enhance the fish and wildlife of our state. The WDFW enforces the state anadromous fish and shellfish harvest and management laws. It also participates in long-range planning involving streams, maintains a fish habitat enhancement program, issues hydraulic project applications permits, provides technical assistance in design of in-stream structures affecting anadromous fish, assures conservation and preservation of salmon resources in the state through intensive fish culture facilities, and cooperates in fish rearing projects with sport groups, tribal organizations, educational facilities, and civic groups.

The WDF&W also continues the Game Commission and its staff. It enforces state fish and game laws, classifies, monitors, and enhances wildlife species, numbers, and habitat; improves hunting and fishing access; and advises individuals and groups on ways to minimize man-made impacts to wildlife.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

The DNR manages and protects state-owned lands. DNR foresters also assist private landowners with the Agriculture Conservation Program (ACP) and the Forestry

Incentive Program (FIP) and provide other limited free technical forestry assistance. The DNR administers the Forest Practices Act, a Washington state law regulating practices such as timber harvest.

² Adapted from Conrad & Glenn, *The Effective Board of Directors – What It Is and How It Works*.

State Agencies

Washington Conservation Commission (WCC)

The Washington State Conservation Commission has ten members. The Commission and its staff provide administrative and program assistance and guidance to districts, disseminate information, and seek sources of funding to aid in district operation.

Department of Agriculture (WSDA)

The Washington State Department of Agriculture administers state laws protecting agricultural producers from diseases, insects, predators, and weeds. The WSDA regulates fruit, seed, and other agricultural product grading. The WSDA also issues and approves licenses for nursery dealers, pesticide operators, and applicators; and issues labeling permits for products used by agricultural producers such as seed, fertilizer, pesticide, etc... The WSDA is also involved in water resources, transportation, farm labor, and other matters related to the production, distribution and sale of agricultural commodities.

Department of Ecology (Ecology)

The Department of Ecology protects and enhances Washington's environment. Ecology programs address air pollution, water pollution, solid waste, hazardous waste, noise pollution, litter and resource recovery, water resources, and shoreline and coastal zone management.

Ecology is both an administrative and a regulatory agency with authority to enforce the state's environmental laws. Ecology monitors all major waterways, administers grants for wastewater treatment facilities, and issues permits for all waste dischargers. Ecology also issues grants to reduce non-point water pollution.

supervise the other employees and the contact supervisor should work through the manager.

The types of tasks performed, or "roles" of board members versus staff, should also be very clear. Although there is overlap, the board generally sets policy and staff implements it. Check to see how closely your board's function in relation to district employees fits this standard. If you hired staff to do a job, let them do it (and don't expect them to do your job either). Keep your respective roles as clear as possible at all times.

The Washington Association of District Employees (WADE) can be a tremendous resource for both supervisors and district employees in clearly defining and strengthening relationships between the board and staff. WADE was established to develop district employees' abilities and act as their voice.

Also, NRCS personnel often act as "staff" for a district. Conservation districts have long had a close, productive relationship with the NRCS. If their schedule and priorities permit them, encourage their assistance to your conservation district. But as with regular staff, don't let the NRCS or other assisting agencies exert too much power over your district. Don't abdicate your legal responsibilities (especially policy and public relations) to district staff or NRCS personnel.

As a final word on staff, in a recent book, Brian O'Connell noted³:

"Most organizations go into a temporary downturn when staff is first hired... A wonderful group of dedicated volunteers, through their own individual efforts and without a staff backup, have scrambled, kicked, and scratched their way to have a significant enough program and are now at a point where they need and can afford some staff assistance. They hire a person and immediately the volunteers relax...they find that the agency is doing less than before

³ The Board Member's Book – Making a Difference in Voluntary Organizations.

they hired staff... Volunteers will tend to conclude that obviously the wrong staff was hired..."

If your district is hiring employees for the first time, don't expect too much from them all at once.

Volunteers

Most people involved in your district are volunteering their time and energy as supervisors, associates, committee members or in other roles. For these volunteers to feel their service was worth contributing, they must see concrete achievements, and to do this they must be supervised and coordinated.

In many ways, supervising volunteers is similar to supervising paid staff. Develop position descriptions for volunteers just as you would for paid employees. This will help you focus on concrete needs for the position and assure the volunteer that you need someone to do a real job. The position description also acts as a written agreement, legally protecting the volunteer and the district. After writing position descriptions, develop recruitment, orientation, training, and evaluation programs for them. You may want to have a volunteer coordinator (similar to a contact supervisor) to help carry out these duties.

Do everything you can to make volunteers feel comfortable and fulfilled in the service they are rendering to conservation. Volunteers are motivated by a variety of factors such as self-expression, philanthropy, and many others. Try to help them fulfill these motivations. Treat volunteers as co-workers: provide good working conditions, promote them to greater responsibilities, give them a part in planning, and let them know how much you appreciate them, both personally and professionally. Supervisors and other conservation district volunteers serve without monetary compensation for their time, but if they incur other expenses in their service to your district, try to reimburse them.

Federal Agencies

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

The FSA administers cost-sharing programs to farmers implementing conservation. It also provides aerial photos for conservation work; assistance for land treatment and development, and natural disaster relief.

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

The BPA markets hydroelectric power in the Pacific Northwest.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

The USFWS is responsible for wild birds, mammals (except certain marine mammals), and inland sport fisheries. The USFWS conducts research activities, conducts environmental impact assessments, and manages wildlife refuges. In some cases, USFWS provides funding for habitat restoration projects.

Forest Service (USFS)

The USFS has federal responsibility for forestry. The USFS sponsors cooperative programs through state forestry agencies, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and conservation districts to control fires, stabilize gullies, improve forest growth, plant trees, and control forest pests.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

The NMFS is responsible for providing programs to try to save the marine endangered species of the United States. Their actions affect the Columbia River and Snake River watersheds of the Northwest.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

The NRCS has a long extensive tradition of work with conservation districts. The NRCS provides personnel, equipment, office space, and counsel to districts. It also provides free technical assistance with soils, conservation practices, and planning to land users and others.

governments; district associations; and private organizations and businesses. Many agencies and organizations have a strong interest in the same natural resources you are working with. It is important to involve them in your planning and implementation activities.

Assistance is set up formally through a Cooperative Agreement, or a Memorandum of Understanding (see glossary for definitions). You can also involve groups more informally by appointing their representatives as associate supervisors, advisors, or committee members.

Administration

Supervisors administer the district by delegating tasks through a structure of board officers and members, committees, and others. They also raise and budget district funds, and document their activities for the public.

Administrative Structure

Conservation district administration is led by board Officers and carried out through committees. Regardless of what office you hold or committees you are on, you must understand their roles and how they interrelate to administer district programs.

Chair

The Chair is the head of your board. The Chair sets the meeting agenda, presides at meetings, appoints committees, assigns their responsibilities and asks for their reports, and orients new supervisors. The Chair cannot vote unless it is to make or break a tie. Nor can the Chair make or second a motion. He may "entertain a motion" but someone else must state it or second it.

Vice Chair

The Vice Chair acts in place of Chair when needed and advises the Chair on program and policy. They also arrange special programs for regular board meetings and serve as Chair of at least one standing committee.

Secretary

The Secretary through the district staff notifies members of each meeting, provides the Chair with a list of business items to place on agenda, keeps board meeting minutes, records of committees, and correspondence on behalf of the board, and prepares district reports. The secretary also ensures that all forms of communication (memos, financial statements, files, etc.) are properly documented in accordance with the Procedure Manual.

Treasurer Auditor

The Treasurer Auditor oversees the conservation district's finances and usually serves as chair of the finance committee. He or she provides or arranges for surety bonds (for individuals handling funds -- to protect from theft and misuse of district funds), leads budget development, receives, deposits and disburses funds, keeps complete financial records, and presents financial statements at meetings. The "Treasurers Handbook" lists further responsibilities of the board treasurer.

Meetings

Meetings are fundamental to conducting conservation district business. Monthly board meetings have two basic purposes: to decide on conservation district policy and to monitor their implementation. Board meetings also serve social, educational, inspirational, and communication purposes. Board meetings must be open to the public, except for special circumstances as specified in the Procedure Manual.

Supervisors also participate in meetings of committees, conservation district associations, and groups where they represent the district. Regardless of the nature of the meeting, there are many techniques to make them smooth and effective, whether you are presiding or not.

Participants should be notified well ahead of the meeting (preferably at least 1 week). This notification should include an agenda, listing the reason for the meeting, location, time, items to be discussed, estimated meeting length and important reference materials. Most meeting agendas follow this basic order:

1. Reading of the minutes.
2. Treasurers Report.
3. Old business.
4. Committee Reports.
5. New Business.
6. Plans for next meeting.
7. Adjourn.

You might also include quotes from "satisfied cooperators," and results of evaluations. Your annual report can be a glossy brochure, or an issue of the district newsletter or local newspaper. If you do one of the latter two, obtain extra copies for distribution to the Conservation Commission and others who should receive this report.

Special Reports

Many grant sources require quarterly reports of project accomplishments, remaining tasks, problems encountered, and fiscal data. There may also be specific local conservation issues that you want to address in a special report.

Legal Liabilities

Accountability is important because, as stewards of public funds and an entity working with individuals and other entities, legal complications may arise. As a district supervisor, you have some protection from liability while discharging your official duties as a supervisor, and can request the state attorney if necessary.

All districts should provide errors and emissions insurance for district officials. Hopefully, you will not need this protection. The best way to avoid legal liability is to conscientiously perform your job as a supervisor -- understand your role and responsibilities as specified in the Conservation District Procedure Manual, keep accurate minutes, go to board meetings, keep well informed of what your district is doing, and stay free of any potential conflicts of interest. Board members shouldn't have any business transactions with the district, unless it is under specific conditions as stated in the Procedure Manual.

Assistance

Conservation districts establish priorities and direct action on local natural resource concerns by developing long range and annual plans. Districts also often work together on multi-district conservation activities, such as watershed projects. In all cases, districts rely on cooperative assistance and funding from federal, state, and local

budgeting, accounting, and reporting system ("BARS") to help, but all supervisors must be aware of what is involved. Section 340 of the Procedure Manual has specific information on accounting and budgeting systems for conservation districts and references for further information.

Reports

Another important part of accountability is keeping a documented public record of how your conservation district uses money and volunteer support. Annual, quarterly, and special reports help you maintain contact with your community, and show them what you are doing with public funds.

Reports don't have to be boring, legalistic texts. Research your reports carefully to determine essential facts. Use your reports as a tool for education and public relations: use nice graphics, simple concise language, photos, cartoons, etc., to make your conservation district's story as attractive and readable as possible. Your reports have to compete with many other pieces of communication -- make them attractive and meaningful, with high quality printing. You might even consider asking your readers to fill out an evaluation form on your report.

Annual Reports

The annual report is the story of what your district accomplished in the last year. It is your most important report and the one which will get the most public view. Commission staff can provide assistance and ideas for formatting your annual report. The annual report should cover:

- The natural resource condition improvements including the amounts of soil erosion prevented, water quality changes, etc.
- Mission of your district.
- Accomplishments (conservation practices achieved, etc.).
- Program activities (grant work, etc.).
- Other highlights or special events of the year.

It doesn't hurt to give committee members a reminder telephone call a day or two before the meeting.

Pay close attention to meeting arrangements. Plan in advance for a comfortable room, parking, refreshments, and audio-visual resources (easels, blackboards, slide projectors, public address systems, etc.).

Arrange the room so everyone has as much face to face contact as possible (ex: a round table or a square "donut"). If you invite the public or guests, consider setting name tags in front of everyone. Another good tool is self introductions

Parliamentary Procedure

Most meetings, especially formal meetings, are run on the basis of Parliamentary Procedure or Roberts Rules of Order. Under these rules, a voting member suggests the board make a decision by stating a motion ("I move..."). A second member of the board states their support for the motion by seconding the motion ("I second the motion"). If not seconded, the motion drops. The board then discusses the merits of the motion. If a board member wants to change the motion, he or she can move to amend the motion ("I move to amend the motion by {strike out, insert, or add.}..."). This amendment must be seconded, discussed, and voted on. One amendment may be added to the original motion⁴. After discussion, the Chair re-states the motion, and the group votes on the motion or "motion as amended" and the decision is made. If the group agrees to pass the motion then the "motion has been carried". You must have a quorum of at least 3 of the 5 supervisors (not associate supervisors) to do any official business (move, and/or second motions, vote, etc.) at a conservation district board meeting.

This is a brief description of parliamentary procedure. Consult the Procedure Manual for other rules covering specific situations, such as "amending an amendment." Use some restraint in applying Robert's Rules to provide flexibility to address the details of issues. If things get too

⁴ This amendment may be amended. After amendment to the amendment has been voted on, other parts of the "Motion as amended" may be amended further.

"hot" you can always fall back on them, perhaps through an appointed parliamentarian (someone who understands the details of Robert's Rules and helps the group adhere to them). NACD can provide a handout on basic parliamentary procedure to help the district become proficient at this.

Group Process

It is also important to be aware of group process at meetings you attend. We all engage in a variety of behaviors at meetings. We do certain things to ensure that the tasks are accomplished, others to maintain the cohesiveness of the group, and still others to fulfill individual agendas (both positive and negative). Groups must balance between task (getting the work of the group done) and relationship (helping people enjoy working in the group). An agenda helps you focus on the tasks to be accomplished at the meeting.

Relationship is a little more complicated. People have many different ways of operating in a group. Step back and look for patterns in the way you communicate with others and see what you can improve. Persons' attributes which drive you "crazy" when working with them probably have positive sides as well -- try to identify that side, appreciate it, and work together. You may want to look for resources to enhance listening and other group skills. Note the ten commandments of member meetings listed below.

- Memorials and honorary gifts. (Ex: the relative of a deceased conservation-minded person establishing a scholarship fund in their memory)
- Bequests.

Budgets

An important part of district finances is developing budgets to allocate conservation district funds and other resources. Your district budget should be prepared annually by the finance committee, in conjunction with the district annual plan, and should include:

- A narrative summary.
- Projected expenses and revenue.
- A five year review of revenue and expenses.
- The proposed budget with the prior year's actual expenditures and income, and the recommended allocation for the coming year for each line item.

It is also a good idea to budget staff time to accomplish your objectives. You may also include dollar value estimates of volunteer contributions. To keep track of your budget status, the board treasurer should report on income, expenses, and other budget status information at monthly board meetings.

Accountability

Funds obtained by conservation districts are classified as public funds, regardless of how obtained. As public officials, you are accountable for funds, property, and equipment belonging to your district. You should also report to the public on how you are using their resources.

Audits

The state examiner audits a district's books every 1, 2 or 3 years. Districts must provide evidence of having performed an internal audit in the years there are no state audits. Districts must also provide for an annual report of accounts, receipts, and disbursements. The district treasurer auditor leads this accounting effort with employee assistance. There are computer software packages, and the state

Counties may also consider supporting their conservation district financially because:

Grants

Grant funds are awarded to an agency or organization on a competitive basis for a fixed period of time, usually for very specific purposes. Federal and state government, state councils on humanities, and private and industrial foundations are all sources of grants. The Centennial Clean Water Fund, currently a major grant source for Washington conservation districts, is administered through the Washington Conservation Commission and the Department of Ecology. Conservation districts may also apply for grants in wildlife habitat development, road drainage protection, food security, Puget Sound water quality, and other areas.

Grants are usually obtained by writing a proposal. Individual grant proposals usually have to follow a unique, detailed format outlined by the grantor. Typical proposals include:

18. A project summary.
19. A statement of the problem.
20. Methods to be used to solve the problem.
21. Evaluation criteria.
22. Future funding sources.
23. A budget.

The Washington Conservation Commission can provide guidance as you write grant proposals. There are also private institutions which offer assistance to groups seeking funds through grants.

Local Income Projects

Many conservation districts undertake local fund-raising activities. Examples of such activities include:

- Conservation equipment rental (ex: no-till drill).
- Retail sales (ex: conservation related items such as trees, gravel, etc.)

Ten Commandments of Member Meetings

8. Thou Shall come prepared to group meetings.
9. Thou Shall seek common direction in working with others.
10. Thou Shall share oneself as a resource in the group.
11. Thou Shall be open to listen to the ideas of others.
12. Thou Shall take responsibility for helping the group make decisions and solve problems.
13. Thou Shall speak only for thyself.
14. Thou Shall help evaluate the group effort.
15. Thou Shall evaluate thine own contributions.
16. Thou Shall help celebrate and honor successes.
17. Thou Shall do what follow-up is agreed on after the meeting of the group.

Try to start and end meetings on time. Most district board meetings, for example, shouldn't take much longer than 2 hours. Following specific meeting procedures will help you achieve the ends of your meeting and use your and others' valuable volunteer time wisely. Also, setting a yearly calendar for all board meetings will help people know well in advance when meetings will take place. You might also stagger meeting times, in case there is a specific time of the day, week, or month that certain participants aren't able to attend.

Minutes

Minutes are a very important part of meetings. Minutes provide a written record of the meeting and become very important as you deal with weighty issues, such as managing a grant. Minutes should include:

- Name of committee or board.
- Type of meeting.
- Date.
- Place.
- Name of presiding officer.
- Members present.
- Whether minutes of previous meeting were read and approved financial report approved.

-
- Major problems or issues.
 - Motions made.
 - Motions carried.
 - Length of meeting.
 - Summary of official actions.

Normally the board secretary or designee takes minutes, and they are read and approved at the next meeting. Minutes should be sent out as soon as possible after the meeting, by email if possible, so everyone has a written reference to commitments they made and can note corrections or additions to the minutes while the meeting is still fresh in memory.

Annual Meetings

Annual meetings are a special type of conservation district meeting. They are frequently large, banquet style affairs with an educational or inspirational presentation. Annual meetings provide an opportunity to interact informally with cooperators, assisting agencies, and others, as well as update them on current district activities and direction. They are also an occasion to recognize supervisors, agencies, and individuals who have helped in district programs.

Try to make your annual meeting as enjoyable as possible. Assemble an ad hoc committee to make arrangements for an interesting location and send personal invitations. You should also take advantage of publicity opportunities by sending advance notices to the media.

Conservation District Finances

To develop effective conservation programs, your board must obtain adequate district funding. Conservation districts receive and disburse public funds. Supervisors must also account for how district funds and other assets, such as conservation tillage equipment, are used. The Treasurer's Handbook and the Procedure Manual list specific procedures for issuing receipts, petty cash, etc. Conservation district funds should be handled only by supervisors or conservation district employees that

have been delegated this responsibility and bonded with a surety bond.

Your board should have a finance committee to oversee all financial aspects of the district and help the board make informed decisions. The finance committee should: review sources of funding, develop budgets and budget reports, arrange required audit procedures, and check the reliability of financial information. Ultimately, decisions on the budgets, etc. are made by the supervisors -- the finance committee helps you do this.

Funding

The first step in conservation district funding is to define your district's need for funds. This is done in conjunction with the annual plan. Then you assess funds from federal, state, or county appropriated funds, grants, and local income-making projects.

Federal, State and County Funds

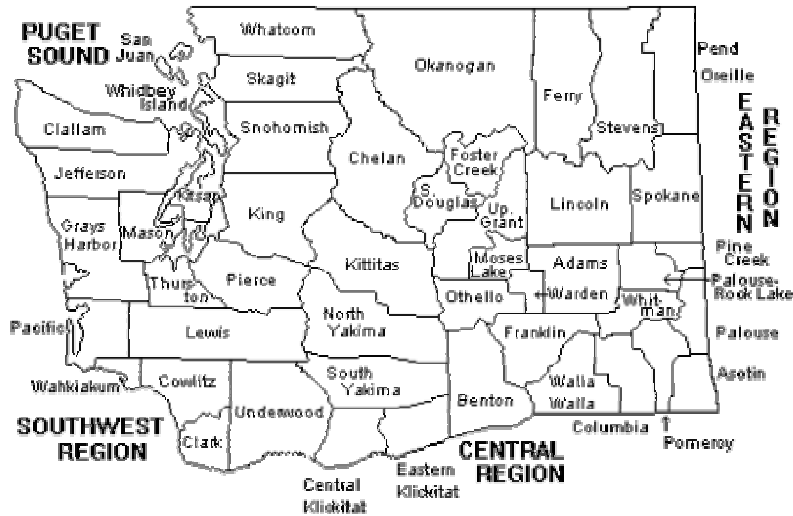
Federal funds for conservation districts are sometimes available from the NRCS through cooperative agreements for specific work. Many cooperative agreements (and grants) require the district to provide matching funds or a "match." Occasionally services or materials can be substituted for matching funds.

State funds for conservation districts are typically provided through the Washington Conservation Commission. Funding is also available through the Departments of Ecology, Wildlife, and other state departments.

You might also try to obtain county funding. Conservation Districts may assess local landowners for operating funds with the approval of the county government. Reference: Washington Conservation Commission 1992 Update: Special Assessments ...A Guide to Raising Revenue. There are many reasons for the county to support your district. In addition to benefits provided to individual landowners in the county, conservation districts can help counties with soil surveys and interpretations for planning, county assessment, structures, highways, and drainages.

Washington State Conservation Districts

Washington State Conservation District Directory



Puget Sound Region	Southwest Region	Central Region	Eastern Region
Clallam CD	Clark CD	Adams CD	Asotin County CD
Jefferson County CD	Cowlitz CD	Benton CD	Columbia CD
King CD	Gray Harbor CD	Central Klickitat CD	Ferry CD
Pierce CD	Kitsap CD	Chelan CD	Lincoln County CD
San Juan County CD	Lewis County CD	Eastern Klickitat CD	Palouse CD
Skagit CD	Mason CD	Foster Creek CD	Palouse-Rock Lake CD
Snohomish CD	Pacific CD	Franklin CD	Pend Oreille CD
Thurston CD	Wahkiakum CD	Kittitas County CD	Pine Creek CD
Whatcom CD		Moses Lake CD	Pomeroy CD
Whidbey Island CD		North Yakima CD	Spokane County CD
		Okanogan CD	Stevens County CD
		Othello CD	Walla Walla County CD
		South Douglas CD	Whitman CD
		South Yakima CD	
		Underwood CD	
		Upper Grant CD	
		Warden CD	

District	Address	Phone
Adams	402 E. Main, Ritzville 99169-1338	509/659-1553
Asotin County	720 - 6th St., Ste. B, Clarkston 99403-2012	509/758-8012
Benton	24106 N. Bunn Rd., Prosser 99350	509/786-9230
Central Klickitat	1107 S. Columbus Ave., Goldendale 98620-9296	509/773-5823
Chelan County	301 Yakima St. Room 307, Wenatchee 98801-2996	509/664-0265
Clallam	111 E. 3rd, Room 2A, Port Angeles 98362-3018	360/452-1912
Clark	11104 NE 149th St, Bldg. C, Ste. 400, Brush Prairie 98606-9518	360/883-1987
Columbia	U.S. Post Office Building, 202 S. Second St., Dayton 99328-1327	509/382-4773
Cowlitz	2125 - 8th Ave., Longview 98632	360/425-1880
Eastern Klickitat	1107 S. Columbus Ave., Goldendale 98620-9296	509/773-5823
Ferry	84 E. Delaware Ave., PO Box 1045, Republic 99166-1045	509/775-3473
Foster Creek	103 N. Baker St., PO Box 428, Waterville 98858-0428	509/745-8362
Franklin	1620 Road 44 N., Pasco 99301-2667	509/545-8546
Grays Harbor	330 Pioneer Ave. W., Montesano 98563-4499	360/249-5980
Jefferson County	205 W. Patison St., Port Hadlock 98339-9751	360/385-4105
King	935 Powell Ave. SW, Renton 98055-2908	206/764-3410
Kitsap	817 Sidney Ave, Port Orchard 98366-2460	360/337-7171
Kittitas County	607 E. Mountain View Ave., Ellensburg 98926-3863	509/925-8585
Lewis County	1554 Bishop Rd., Chehalis 98532	360/748-0083
Lincoln County	1310 Morgan St., PO Box 46, Davenport 99122-0046	509/725-4181
Mason	SE 1051 Hwy 3, Ste. G, Shelton 98584	360/427-9436
Moses Lake	1775 SE Hwy. 17, Moses Lake 98837-9326	509/765-5333
North Yakima	1606 Perry Street, Ste. F, Yakima 98902-5769	509/454-5736
Okanogan	1251 S. 2nd Ave. Room 101, Okanogan 98840	509/422-0855
Othello	449 E. Cedar Blvd., Othello 99344-0323	509/488-2802
Pacific	1216 Robert Bush Dr., PO Box 968, South Bend 98586-0968	360/875-9424
Palouse	325 NW State Street, Pullman 99163	509/332-4101
Palouse-Rock Lake	N. 3 Front St., PO Box 438, St. John 99171-0438	509/648-3680
Pend Oreille	100 N. Washington Ave., PO Box 280, Newport 99156-0280	509/447-5370
Pierce	Puyallup Executive Park, 1011 E. Main, Ste. 106, Puyallup 98372	253/845-9770
Pine Creek	805 S. Vista Point Dr., Ste. 2, Colfax 99111-9565	509/397-4636
Pomeroy	USDA Bldg, 804 Main St., PO Box 468, Pomeroy 99347-0468	509/843-1998
San Juan County	350 Court Street #10, Friday Harbor, WA 98250-7910	360/378-6621
Skagit	2021 E. College Way, Ste. 203, Mt. Vernon 98273-2373	360/428-4313
Snohomish	528 - 91st Ave. NE, Ste. C, Everett 98205-1535	425/335-5634
South Douglas	103 N. Baker, PO Box 246, Waterville 98858-0246	509/745-9160
South Yakima	1116 A Yakima Valley Hwy., Sunnyside 98944-1555	509/837-7911
Spokane County	210 North Havana, Spokane 99202-4724	509/535-7274
Stevens County	232 Williams Lake Rd., Colville 99114-2629	509/685-0937
Thurston	2400 Bristol Court SW, Ste 100, Olympia 98502	360/754-3588
Underwood	170 NW Lincoln St., PO Box 96, White Salmon 98672-0096	509/493-1936
Upper Grant	2145 Basin St. SW, Ste. C, Ephrata 98823-9617	509/754-0195
Wahkiakum	PO Box 67, Cathlamet 98612-0067	360/795-8240
Walla Walla County	1501 Business One Circle, Ste. 101, Walla Walla 99362-9526	509/522-6340
Warden	PO Box 177, Warden 98857-0177	509/349-7539
Whatcom	6975 Hannegan Rd., Lynden 98264-9620	360/354-2035
Whidbey Island	PO Box 490, Coupeville 98239-0490	360/678-4708
Whitman	805 S. Vista Point Dr. Ste. 2, Colfax 99111-9565	509/397-4636